



Say Your Final Prayer



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Chapter 1 by -

Three muscular men in black pants and white tank tops stood around me. The leader - Santos - came forward with a white cloth bag. He pulled out his pistol and put it to my head.

"Say your final prayer!"

Chapter 2 by Garcou



Claudia groans in frustration and lets her head fall to the table top. She had been working on this sentence for the last hour and a half, and she still couldn't think of what Carlos would do in this situation. His best friend, Alejandro, had been murdered three years ago. The police had given up looking for his murdered after three weeks. Carlos was outraged. He was sure that the murderer was still close. It was left unsolved. So he had gone looking for his friend's killer. Three years after Alejandro's death, Carlos had succeeded in finding the killer, and now, he was probably seconds away from seeing his friend again.

A knock on her door pulls Claudia out of her musings. "What?" She says, her voice muffled by the stack of papers her forehead was resting on. "Claudia?" A voice calls. "Sofia got sent home from school... again." Sofia. Her daughter of six years. Claudia smiles and sits up, rubbing her

hands over her face before quickly straightening the papers on her desk and standing. She walks to the door, her socked feet hitting the newly installed floor boards, and opens it, revealing her sister. "What's up?" she asks as she scoots around her sister and heads to the kitchen. "I'm not trying to upset her daughter any more that she knew she would be."

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"For what?" She turns and asks Andrea over her shoulder. "For punching a boy and sending him to the hospital." She says, unimpressed. Claudia raises a brow and smiles slightly to herself. "Sofia! Where are you?" She calls again, louder this time. Sofia, with her light blue eyes, jet black hair, and tan complexion, was a stunning child. She was lying on the floor of the living room staring at the ceiling. Her nice white dress that Claudia had given to her for a birthday present was covered in blood. Claudia unconsciously places a hand over her chest as she assesses the situation.

Sofia sighs dramatically and sits up slowly. "Mama, he said that I was a bastard." She says in explanation. Claudia gasps slightly at the word bastard. When she had woken up this morning and sent Sofia off to school, she had no idea she'd come back with that word in her vocabulary. Sofia watches her mother's face for a while before standing. "A bastard is a person who is born to people who aren't married to each other, or an unpleasant or displicable person." She crosses her arms and glares at the floor. "Am I displicable?" She asks. Claudia shakes her head and hides a slight smile behind her hand. "You are one of the most delightful children I know, Sofia." Claudia kneels and pulls Sofia into a hug. "You are not despicable." She says, correctly pronouncing the tricky word for her daughter.

Sofia nods. "I did get him good though." She says, a hint of smugness on her voice. Claudia snorts. "Who said it? Was it Alberto? Cleto?" Claudia asks, listing off the boys in Sofia's class who she knew to be rascals. Sofia shakes her head. "No. It was Marco." Claudia blinks in surprise. "Marco. You, put Marco Sanchez in the hospital?" She asks as she holds Sofia out at arms length. Sofia nods and looks at her dress. "He ruined my dress." Claudia tilts her head to one side and raises an accusing brow. "But, if you hadn't punched him, there wouldn't be blood on your dress, now would there?" Sofia looks into her mother's eyes and sighs, shaking her head. "No. There wouldn't. But he had no right to say those things. He's a liar." She says, getting angry again.

Claudia nods. "Then, you should have smiled at him and asked if he always uses a dictionary when he was picking on little girls eight years younger than himself." They both hug and share a laugh before Claudia helps Sofia out of her dress, bathe, and get a snack. Andrea pulls Claudia aside and sighs. "Are you going to discipline your daughter, or let her become a rebellious brat

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